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Farm Broadcasters Letter

United States Department of Agriculture Office of Public Affairs Radio-TV Division Washington D.C. 20250 (202) 447-4330

Letter No. 2476

Sept. 14, 1990

EMBARGO EFFECTS -- Iraq is highly dependent on food imports, normally receiving over 75 percent of its caloric needs from sources outside the nation. But, because Iraq is a small country, the Iraqi embargo will have a relatively small impact on world markets. So, the embargo will reduce Iraqi access to food supplies without unduly disrupting world ag trade, USDA says. In the U.S., oil prices of \$30 or \$40 per barrel would reduce net farm income in 1991, while raising food prices 1 to 2 percent. Each 1 percent increase in food prices increases Food Stamp costs by about \$170 million the following year. **Contact: Roger Conway (202) 447-2634.**

DONATIONS TO MIDDLE EAST REFUGEES -- Secretary of Agriculture **Clayton Yeutter** says USDA's Commodity Credit Corporation has begun buying rice, vegetable oil & wheat flour from U.S. suppliers to donate for feeding refugees in the Middle East. CCC buys the foodstuffs in cooperation with the Agency of International Development. CCC will buy 20,000 metric tons of rice, 2,000 tons of vegetable oil and 5,000 tons of wheat flour. **Contact: Kelly Shipp (202) 447-4623.**

A ROBOTIC WALK IN THE WOODS -- USDA scientists are testing an experimental robot that will walk, rather than roll, through the woods of southwest Virginia. **Robert Koepfen**, a USDA forest products technologist, says a walking vehicle might drastically reduce vehicle damage to forest soils & vegetation. Wheeled vehicles can damage trees and plant, compact the soil and are limited by rough, steep and wet terrain. **Contact: Robert Koepfen (202) 453-9565.**

OVEREATING & METABOLISM -- The person who can eat & eat and never gain a pound, probably doesn't exist, USDA scientists say. **Susan B. Roberts**, a USDA Physiologist, fed seven young men about 1,000 more calories each day than they would normally eat. Although weight gains varied markedly among the men, all gained weight. The findings show that your metabolism doesn't automatically gear up to prevent weight gain when you eat extra calories day after day. Once the men stopped overeating, they dropped weight rapidly. **Contact: Susan B. Roberts (617) 556-3075.**

BIOTECHNOLOGY MEETINGS -- USDA will hold meetings in California, Missouri, North Carolina and the District of Columbia this month to get public comments on biotechnology guidelines. The guidelines evaluate safety measures needed to protect human health & the environment for proposed research projects involving genetically modified organisms. These meetings will give the public an opportunity to help shape USDA policy of field testing modified organisms, says **Alvin A. Young**, director of USDA's Office of Agricultural Biotechnology. **Contact: Marti Asner (703) 235-4416.**

EARLY WARNING SYSTEM FOR HARMFUL BACTERIA -- USDA scientists have added three food poisoning bacteria to a computer program that analyzes what inhibits or promotes bacterial growth. According to USDA Microbiologist **Robert L. Buchanan**, the computer analysis could cut by 75 percent the number of tests companies do when they are developing new food. **Contact: Robert L. Buchanan (215) 233-6620.**

DON'T LET ACCIDENTS BEFALL THIS FALL -- Fall is the time when nature puts on a glorious show and farmers busy themselves with harvest. Agriculture has the highest accidental death rate per 100,000 workers. Every farmer could cut farm safety risks by: making accident prevention a management goal, knowing how to prevent farming injuries, routinely inspect all equipment, training employees and family workers, be prepared for each activity and protect children, the elderly and others in their care. Source: National Safety Council's Agri-Safety's Newsletter. **Contact: Jack Burke (312) 527-4800, ext. 7602.**

NEWSLETTER HOLIDAY -- We won't print the **Farm Broadcasters Letter** on Sept. 28. Several of our staff, Deputy Chief **Brenda Curtis**, TV Producer **Lynn Wyvill**, Chief Vic **Powell** & FBL Editor **Marci Hilt** will be in San Jose, Calif., attending the Radio TV News Directors Association annual conference. USDA will once again have an exhibit booth at the event, which is a warm-up for the National Association of Farm Broadcasters annual conference in November.



HAIL, HAIL, THE GANG'S ALL HERE (Well, almost) -- USDA R-TV staffers recently gathered at the DC Region of the Agricultural Communicators in Education ice cream social to see USDA TV's **Debbie Janifer** installed as secretary and to see USDA's Director of Media Liaison **Marci Hilt** receive an award for "outstanding support in the coordination of the ACE DC Chapter Annual Workshop." Front row, left to right: **Maria Bynum, Debbie Janifer, Mocile Trotter.** Back row, left to right: **Vic Powell, Marci Hilt, Brenda Curtis, Lynn Wyvill & Pat O'Leary.** (USDA Photo.)

FROM OUR RADIO SERVICE

AGRICULTURE USA #1736 -- With cool weather just about to descend on us, we may still have a few days to work on our lawns for a great lawn next spring.
Maria Bynum talks with an expert.

CONSUMER TIME #1218 -- Buying grass seed this fall, late season lawn watering tips, food & sports, organic food trends, poor home air quality.

AGRITAPE NEWS & FEATURES #1725 -- USDA News Highlights, USDA commodities headed for Middle East, citrus quarantine lifted, "spotting" citrus canker, new crop price forecasts.

NEWS FEATURE FIVE #1337 -- Making sturdier Norway maple trees, making maples more colorful in the Fall, a clue to mystery swine disease, sweet smelling peaches, chemical detectives.

UPCOMING ON USDA RADIO NEWSLINE -- Wed., Sept. 19, cattle on feed, horticultural exports; Thurs., Sept. 20, ag outlook, U.S. trade update, catfish production; Fri., Sept. 21, livestock update, ag resources report on land & water conservation; Mon., Sept. 24, world ag outlook; Tues. Sept. 25, crop/weather update; Wed., Sept. 26, aquaculture outlook, poultry production; Thurs., Sept. 27, grain stocks, world tobacco situation.

DIAL THE USDA RADIO NEWSLINES (202) 488-8358 or 8359.

Material changed at 5 p.m., EDT, each working day.

FROM OUR TELEVISION NEWS SERVICE

(Week of Sept. 13, 15 & 17)

FEATURES -- **Pat O'Leary** reports on farm tractors of the future; **Will Pemble** reports on frozen concentrate milk; **Mike Thomas** of the University of Missouri reports on the decline of milk fat; **Artis Ford** of the University of Mississippi reports on Delta cotton.

ACTUALITIES -- **Norton Strommen**, USDA meteorologist, with a crop & weather update; **James Donald**, chairman of USDA's Outlook Board, with a world ag supply & demand forecast; **Steve McDonald**, USDA economist, on U.S. ag imports & exports; **Steve Milmoe**, USDA economist, on the U.S. trade deficit; **Greg Gajewsky**, USDA analyst, on trade with Sub-Saharan markets.

AG UPDATE -- A five minute presentation of farm program info; delivered in news desk format.

UPCOMING FEATURES -- **DeBoria Janifer** reports on USDA's new plant hardiness map; **Will Pemble** reports on making whiter wool.

Available on Satellite **Westar IV**, audio 6.2 or 6.8:

THURSDAY7:30 - 7:45 p.m., EDT, Transponder 12D (Channel 23)
 SATURDAY10:30 - 11:15 a.m., EDT, Transponder 10D (Channel 19)
 MONDAY8:30 - 9:15 a.m., EDT, Transponder 12D (Channel 23)

OFFMIKE

AMERICAN FARMERS...returning to Iowa and Minnesota from an exchange program with the USSR, were acutely aware of the abundance of reasonably priced food in the U.S., says Lee Kline (WHO, Des Moines, Iowa). Members of the group told WHO they were impressed with Soviet resources such as soil, rainfall, lay of the land, the nation's technological achievements, and the fact that the USSR hasn't been able to put it all together and make it work to enable the country to feed itself. Lee is in his 36th year at WHO. He says covering the dynamic business of agriculture remains as exciting as the day he started because there's always something new developing.

HARVEST...should arrive before the first frost, says Bruce Lease (KLQL/KQAD, Luverne, Minn.). Recent warm weather has hastened corn & soybean development, helping them reach maturity before the killing cold temperatures of early October. Yields are expected to be above average, thanks to timely rains.

Farm Broadcasters Letter



Office of Public Affairs
Radio-TV Division
U.S. Department of Agriculture
Washington, D.C. 20250-1300

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BIGGEST CONCERN...of producers in the area served by Darrin Johnston (WKFI, Wilmington, Ohio) is how soon the frost will arrive. Several producers have soybeans blooming in mid-September, and harvest for silage is getting underway two-weeks late. Several producers could be hurt even if frost arrives on schedule. Darrin says county fair coverage continues into late September, and that crew equipment includes a warm jacket.

ELECTIONS...in Ontario will create some changes. David Imrie (CKCO-TV/CFCA-FM, Kitchener, Ontario) says he is busy interviewing possible candidates for agriculture minister. Wet weather in late August interfered with the winter wheat harvest, but the corn crop is the best ever. Dave says the unusual weather included two tornadoes, uncommon in the area, and hail which caused damage to some tobacco producers.

VIC POWELL
Chief, Radio & TV Division